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ABSTRACT

Designed to measure a person's knowledge of commonly used prefixes and root words, this test is composed of the twelve most frequently occurring prefixes and the twelve most frequently occurring root words derived from Latin. During the untimed test, students are directed to select the best meanings for prefixes and other word parts. Content validity was established by reliance on the blueprint for the test and by submitting the instrument to the judgment of three language experts. The coefficient alpha reliability as calculated on the normative data was .75. [This document is one of those reviewed in The Research Instruments Project (TRIP) monograph "Measures for Research and Evaluation in the English Language Arts" to be published by the Committee on Research of the National Council of Teachers of English in cooperation with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills. A TRIP review which precedes the document lists its category (Reading), title, author, date, and age range (senior high, postsecondary, adult), and describes the instrument's purpose and physical characteristics.] (JM)

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CS 201 335

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
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Category: Reading

Title: "Morpheme Knowledge Test"

Author: James F. Shepherd

Age Range: Senior High, Post Secondary - Adult

Description of Instrument:

Purpose ► This test is designed to measure a person's knowledge of commonly used prefixes and root words.

Date of Construction ► 1973

Physical Description ► The most frequently occurring prefixes and Latin roots were determined by examining lists accumulated by past researchers, and by examining various dictionaries. The various spellings of the Latin roots and prefixes were analysed to determine which of them frequently combine to form derivatives. Twenty frequently occurring roots and twenty frequently occurring prefixes were identified and on the basis of an item analysis, the most discriminating twelve from each group were retained for the test.

The test is untimed. The author suggests that ninety-five per cent of the students should complete it in ten minutes.

The students are directed to select the best meanings for prefixes and other word parts. The following is a sample question about the meaning of a prefix.

You are to select the best meaning for "re-"

REceive - REduce - REject

a) back, again

b) overly, above

c) not, opposite

d) across, beyond

A sample item about the meaning of other word parts is given below.

You are to select the best meaning for "-cede"

conCEDE - preCEDE - reCEDE

a) to give

b) to go

c) to follow

d) to drive

Validity, Reliability and Normative Data:

Normative data are derived from the scores of 178 subjects (93 community college students and 85 university freshmen). The mean was 12.77, the standard deviation, 4.2 and the standard error of measurement, 2.1. Content validity was established by reliance on the blueprint for the test, and by submitting the instrument to the judgement of three language experts. The coefficient alpha reliability as calculated on the normative data was .75.

Ordering Information:

EDRS

Related Documents:

Shepherd, James F. The Relations Between Knowledge of Word Parts and Knowledge of Derivatives Among College Freshmen. Unpublished Dissertation, New York University, 1973.

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MORPHEME KNOWLEDGE TEST

James F. Shepherd, Ph.D.

Introduction

The Morpheme Knowledge Test is one of four instruments which were constructed for a study which investigated, among other things, the relation between knowledge of the meanings of morphemes and derivatives (8). Other morpheme tests have been developed by Carroll (3), Hunt (5), and Hogan (4), but the Morpheme Knowledge Test has three characteristics which are not shared with any other known instrument:

1. It produces reliable results when administered to heterogeneous groups of subjects who have had no special training in the meanings of bound forms.
2. The bound bases are all Latin roots which appear frequently in English words.
3. The prefixes are all those which combine frequently with Latin roots to form derivatives.

Development Procedures

Test Blueprint. The most frequently occurring prefixes and Latin roots were determined by studying lists accumulated by Stauffer (9), Brown (2), Lindsay (6), Schaeffer (7), and various dictionaries. The various spellings of the Latin roots and prefixes were examined to discover which of them frequently combine to form derivatives.

The following spellings of Latin roots were determined to occur most frequently: -cede, -ceive, -clude, -duce, -fer, -fuse, -ject, -mit, -pel, -port, -pose, -pute, -scribe, -sist,

-spect, -spire, -tain, -tend, -tract, and -verse. The prefixes which were found to combine frequently with these Latin roots to form derivatives were: ad-, circum-, com-, con-, de-, dis-, ex-, im- (in), in- (in), inter-, intro-, ob-, per-, pre-, pro-, re-, retro-, sub-, sup-, and trans-.

Item Analysis. In a pilot study it was discovered that subjects became extremely frustrated in responding to questions about the meanings of bound morphemes. As a result, an item analysis was done to select the most discriminating items. Twelve Latin roots and twelve prefixes were included in the final instrument.

Suffixes. Suffixes were not included in this instrument because of the extreme difficulty in ascribing specific meanings to most of them. Any researcher interested in this problem should consult Thorndike (10) who has studied the frequencies and meanings of English suffixes.

Validity. Content validity of the instrument was established by reliance on the blueprint for the test, and by submitting the instrument to the judgment of three language experts: Professors Sumner Ives, Eric Brown, and John Mayher, all of New York University. The Morpheme Knowledge Test was determined to have the capability of assessing knowledge of the meanings of the bound forms of which it is comprised.

Reliability. The reliability of the test was established on a sample of 93 community college and 85 university freshmen--a total of 178 subjects. The students were all native speakers of English and were majoring in forty different

areas of specialization.

Coefficient alpha reliability was .75, the mean was 12.77, the standard deviation was 4.2, and the standard error of measurement was 2.1.

Though reliability on other populations has not been established, the instrument may be found to be reliable with groups of highschool students, college students, or adults which are very heterogeneously distributed on a measure of verbal intelligence. The distribution of the sample on the Quick Word Test (1) approximated that of the normative sample for that measure of intelligence.

Correlation with Intelligence. A .65 zero-order correlation was computed for the sample between scores on the Morpheme Knowledge Test and the Quick Word Test (1).

Suggested Uses

When administered to groups for which it is reliable, the Morpheme Knowledge Test is an efficient means of collecting data as to subjects' knowledge of the meanings of bound forms.

Administration

The Morpneme Knowledge Test is administered under untimed conditions. Read the directions aloud as subjects follow along silently.

Ninety-five percent of all subjects should complete the test in about ten minutes, but, since students will complete answering questions at different times, this allows

the examiner an opportunity to make certain that each subject has marked an answer for each question.

Scoring

The scores for the test are determined by summing the number of correct answers for the test items. The correct answers are:

1. c	7. d	13. d	19. b
2. c	8. a	14. a	20. d
3. d	9. c	15. c	21. a
4. d	10. a	16. a	22. a
5. b	11. d	17. c	23. d
6. b	12. c	18. d	24. c

Answers may be recorded on any sheet of paper which is numbered 1-24.

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MORPHEME KNOWLEDGE TEST

You are to select the best meanings for prefixes and other word parts.

The following is a sample of a question about the meaning of a prefix. You are to select the best meaning for re-:

REceive-REduce-REject

a. back, again
b. overly, above
c. not, opposite
d. across, beyond

The best meaning given for re- is "a," "back, again."

The following is a sample of a question about the meaning of other word parts. You are to select the best meaning for -cede:

conCEDE-preCEDE-reCEDE

a. to give
b. to go
c. to follow
d. to drive

The best meaning given for -cede is "b," "to go."

You are not expected to know the meanings for all these prefixes and word parts, but you are expected to give the best answers you can. If you are uncertain of an answer, make the best guess you can and go on to the next question. There is no time limit, but work quickly and mark an answer for each question.

You may begin.

PREFIXES

1. CONclude-CONtract-CONfuse

   a. out of, from
   b. in, into
   c. with, together
   d. under, below

2. ADduce-ADmit-ADjoin

   a. in, into
   b. not, opposite
   c. to, toward
   d. apart, away

3. INclude-INfer-INject

   a. not, opposite
   b. with, together
   c. within, inward
   d. in, into

4. INTROduce-INTROvert

   a. across, beyond
   b. around, about
   c. away, down
   d. within, inward

5. IMpel-IMport-IMpose

   a. not, against
   b. in, into
   c. away, down
   d. between, among

6. SUPport-SUPpose-SUPply

   a. in, into
   b. under, below
   c. to, toward
   d. back, again

7. COMmit-COMpel-COMpose

   a. apart, away
   b. around, about
   c. back, backwards
   d. with, together

8. CIRCUMscribe-CIRCUMspect

   a. around, about
   b. back, backwards
   c. away, down
   d. before, in front

9. RETROcede-RETROspect

   a. in, into
   b. under, below
   c. back, backwards
   d. before, in front

10. PERmit-PERtain-PERceive

    a. very, thoroughly
    b. back, again
    c. across, beyond
    d. with, together

11. OBtain-OBject-OBverse

    a. out of, from
    b. back, backwards
    c. away, down
    d. to, toward

12. EXpel-EXport-EXtend

    a. very, thoroughly
    b. under, below
    c. from, out of
    d. inward, within

WORD ROOTS

13. deDUCE-proDUCE-reDUCE

a. to send
b. to carry
c. to stretch
d. to lead

14. preFER-reFER-transFER

a. to carry
b. to go
c. to throw
d. to write

15. conFUSE-inFUSE-transFUSE

a. to shut
b. to drive
c. to pour
d. to place

16. perMIT-reMIT-subMIT

a. to send
b. to stretch
c. to carry
d. to drive

17. exPEL-proPEL-rePEL

a. to place
b. to turn
c. to drive
d. to stand

18. dePORT-rePORT-supPORT

a. to think
b. to speak
c. to lean
d. to carry

19. disPOSE-imPOSE-supPOSE

a. to shape
b. to place
c. to think
d. to stand

20. deSCRIBE-inSCRIBE-subSCRIBE

a. to breathe
b. to take
c. to send
d. to write

21. conSIST-inSIST-reSIST

a. to stand
b. to hold
c. to stretch
d. to draw

22. inSPECT-reSPECT-proSPECT

a. to look
b. to stand
c. to think
d. to breathe

23. conSPIRE-inSPIRE-perSPIRE

a. to allow
b. to speak
c. to send
d. to breathe

24. conTAIN-deTAIN-reTAIN

a. to shut
b. to stretch
c. to hold
d. to take